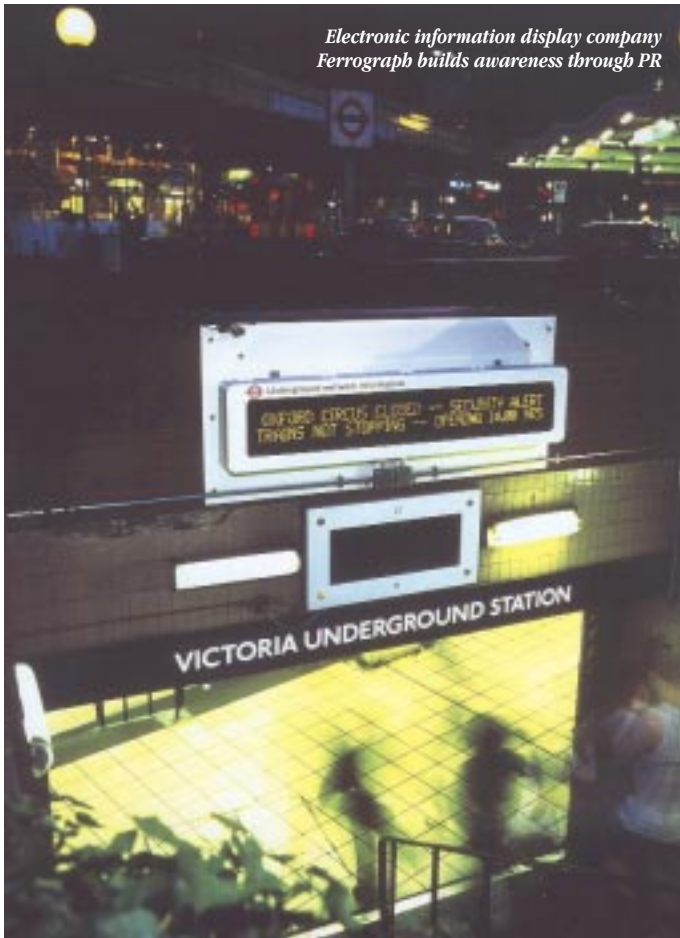


PR in Action...how our clients benefit

❖ PR displays Ferrograph in positive light

PR has been used as the prime marketing communications activity to build awareness for electronic customer information display systems company Ferrograph in end-user markets such as the airport, railways and public transport sectors.

This has been achieved through a series of new product stories, supported mainly by new contract announcements and good quality photography for the trade press.



Electronic information display company Ferrograph builds awareness through PR

Client feedback has confirmed that PR continually out-performs advertising in terms of creating name awareness and, most importantly, driving home sales leads.

❖ At the leading edge of regional government

Bradley O'Mahoney consultant Richard Simpson is playing a leading role in the creation of a directly-elected Regional Assembly for the North East. He is Treasurer to the North East Constitutional Convention and has been appointed convener of a Convention working group which will examine the issues of representation such as which voting system to use and how many members the Assembly should have.

Once the Convention has ratified the proposals from the working groups in September this year it will produce a blueprint for a Regional Assembly which will be delivered to 10 Downing Street.

❖ Omega Plastics

An aggressive and highly focused trade press editorial campaign has ensured the successful launch of Omega Plastics UK - and also demonstrated the power of PR to drive in quality sales leads.

A joint venture between the Express Group of Gateshead and Omega Plastics of Detroit, USA, the operation was officially launched in April last year by Bradley O'Mahoney Public Relations.

An advanced rapid cut aluminium tooling specialist, Omega was entering the highly competitive world of new product development, where manufacturing companies demand speed of response and exceptional levels of accuracy.

Omega sales and marketing manager Ian Hamilton recognised that an editorial campaign in the trade press was vital to educate decision makers about the launch of the business and how it differentiated itself from competitors was vital.

He said: "While we utilised advertising to establish a presence in the market, we realised that PR was the most powerful marketing support tool. It allowed us to educate the market as to the special services we provide, together with the resources and technical expertise that we have to offer.

"The campaign, based around third party endorsement stories and feature articles, not only developed a strong awareness of our business but drove in quality sales leads - some of which we have already converted into business.

"It is my opinion that the partnership we forged with Bradley O'Mahoney sharpened our business message, helped us to develop our key core competencies and to clearly identify which market sectors we wanted to attack.

"This all manifested itself in the creation of a high impact launch that made it much easier for my sales team to set up face-to-face meetings with target customers."

❖ Voice alarm initiative makes PRogress

Public Relations has played a major part in establishing a new initiative to create a compliance body for the voice alarm industry.

Bradley O'Mahoney was appointed by the Professional Lighting and Sound Association (PLASA) in July 1998 to raise awareness of its voice alarm initiative VASA in the industry and the fire safety community.

One of the first tasks Bradley O'Mahoney had to perform was to launch VASA at the PLASA '98 exhibition at London's Earls Court, in September, where VASA also had a stand.

BOM PR consultant Richard Simpson said: "VASA had no identity at all when we started on the account. With the help of Newcastle-based graphic design company Albion, we created a corporate identity. Then we set to work on the wide range of media relevant to VASA, arranging editorial coverage which conveyed VASA's messages to key audiences.

"An important part of our work has been to establish VASA's credibility by gaining endorsements from key third parties such as the Fire Service, the Loss Prevention Council, the Association of British Insurers and the British Safety Council.

"In less than a year VASA has become recognised as the voice of the voice alarm industry. It is in demand from several quarters including the European Standards body CEN, the Loss Prevention Council and the Institute of Building Control."

Controlling all that's fit to print

When it comes to controlling both the content and timing of messages released to internal and external audiences, PR in the form of a newsletter can be a very influential and cost effective marketing communications tool.

Company newsletters, for staff or customers, give you 100% control of the messages to be conveyed and the style in which they're communicated.

Professionally written and produced, and including high quality photography, a newsletter is a very powerful selling aid and offers a medium in which you can communicate to important audiences in a style which reflects your company culture.

Company newsletters fall into two general categories: internal and external.

Staff newsletters are a flexible, dynamic communications vehicle. Informative and well designed, newsletters don't have to be expensive - ranging in scale from glossy full colour magazines to low cost, mono news sheets.



Newsletters give you total control of important messages

The same applies to customer newsletters. A quality production here, speaks volumes for the type of image you wish to present to the outside world. It must reflect your values and qualities - an amateurish production will portray your business in a poor light. Call in professional help to get your message across in the right way.

New business drives growth

National organisation **English Partnerships** (the new agency formed by the coming together of English Partnerships and the Commission for the New Towns) heads up an impressive list of major account wins for Bradley O'Mahoney PR and confirms the consultancy's growing reputation for attracting the eye of business from beyond the region.



Bradley O'Mahoney won the business in the face of stiff competition because of its grasp of the region's property and regeneration issues, which require sensitive handling.

The UK's leading engineering services company **Beck & Pollitzer** has appointed Bradley O'Mahoney PR to launch and raise the profile of its new regional operating centre, based in Washington.

"We are winning increasing business from organisations beyond the region looking to boost their awareness and positioning within the North of England. With our broad expertise and experience, together with our geographical location, we are well placed to service these clients," said senior consultant Andy Bruce.

Other new business includes regional work for automotive components manufacturer **Freudenberg**.

Bradley O'Mahoney PR has also forged a strategic alliance with the North East office of consulting engineers **Ove Arup** and was instrumental in the launch of the **Service Challenge**, which aims to facilitate the growth of the region's professional service industries.

A CRASH course in crisis management

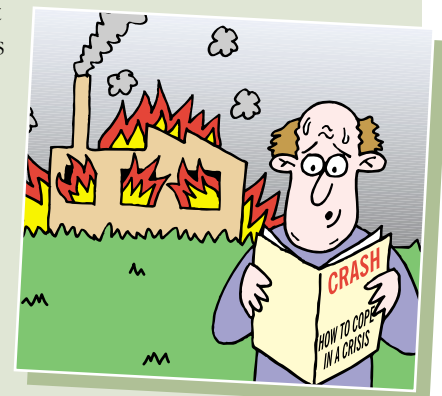
In the event of a crisis how well would you cope? Whether it's a major incident, job losses, a product recall or someone bearing a grudge, any organisation is at risk from a crisis.

To help limit the damage, here's a **CRASH** course in crisis management.

- ❖ **C**entralise control. Ensure that there are consistent messages from all parts of your organisation. Failure to do so potentially leads to disaster and the press will quickly tie you up in knots.
- ❖ **R**eact fast. The press need to be properly and carefully briefed as early as possible. Further information helplines should be up and running as quickly as possible to handle queries from other audiences - staff, customers, suppliers etc - who might be affected by the crisis and worried about its ramifications.
- ❖ **A**ccommodate media needs. Silence breeds suspicion among cynical journalists and concealing information or relevant research may only add fuel to an already blazing inferno!

- ❖ **S**egment the problem. Identify the cause of the problem, isolate the trouble and remain focused. Don't get sidlined by journalists pursuing issues that bear little or no relevance to the matter at hand.
- ❖ **H**uman interest. If it's relevant look for heroic or heart-warming stories that engender warm feelings. Ensure subjects are humble and focus on the fact that they were only doing jobs they were trained to do. That way, confidence in staff will be boosted.

And finally...however bad the problem never, ever say "no comment". The implication is that you could be guilty or have something to hide with your silence.



A professional practice

Newcastle-based Bradley O'Mahoney Public Relations is the region's leading public relations firm, specialising in business-to-business, corporate and marketing communications support for regional, national and international organisations.

The firm employs a number of senior consultants - with backgrounds in journalism, PR and marketing - who have considerable experience in designing communications programmes and projects for a diverse range of clients spanning the corporate, consumer, service, manufacturing and industrial sectors.

These include English Partnerships, Express Group, Imass, Ferrograph, Service Challenge, Capital Radio, LTG Technologies plc, Newcastle City Council, The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, Beck & Pollitzer Engineering and surveying practice Sanderson Townend & Gilbert.

From strategic thinking to tactical implementation, Bradley O'Mahoney offers a comprehensive range of communications services which include media relations, sponsorship planning, corporate identity, seminars, multi media, advertising, newsletters and publications, online services, print and production.

Why the local community is important

By Andrew Horne
Corporate Affairs Manager
Northern Electric plc

Every business is part of the local community in which it operates, yet many act as if they are just passing through.

Some businesses can be at best suspicious of the communities in which they operate, seeing them as a mire in which they might become entrapped.

This kind of siege mentality belies the good will and support that can be found in local communities.

They may not buy your goods or supply you, but they are an important audience that could play a big role in a company's life. To do that they need to be informed so that they can have a constructive and positive perception of your company.

For relatively little effort, communicating with the local community can reap considerable rewards, not least in terms of the quality of employee you are able to recruit and the motivation of the people who already work for you.

Communication can take many forms.

It may be an article in the local paper about a recent contract win, a capital investment, expansion, job creation, the Investors In People award, or an achievement by one of your employees.

It may take the form of sponsoring an event or initiative in the community, taking advertisement space in the church fete programme, supporting an employee to become a school governor, giving away equipment to local schools that may be

surplus to your requirements or holding an open day for employees and their families.

Developing a strategy for involvement with the local community is the start of the process. From that you identify which events or organisations you wish to support and to what end. The size of the budget to be allocated falls out of this process and its application needs to measure the value generated.

Northern Electric contributes about £1 million in sponsorship and community initiatives, around 1% of our pre-tax profits.

This is a large sum and most of it is invested in the North East where the majority of the company's two million-plus customers live.

But size is not what matters - even the smallest business can make a contribution.

Whatever you do, communicate your activity to your stake holders, such as customers and suppliers. Increasingly as business life becomes more and more competitive, businesses will be judged - by potential customers, suppliers and employees - by their engagement with the "quality of life" issues that affect them personally.



Northern Electric recognises the importance of local community PR

Are you preparing for the Millennium?

By Daniel O'Mahoney, Partner

Bradley O'Mahoney Public Relations

The count down to the new Millennium is well and truly on.

From a corporate viewpoint the potential promotional opportunities that its arrival allows seem unlimited.



Daniel O'Mahoney

It is certainly a perfect platform for everything from corporate hospitality through to the repositioning of a company's corporate identity, new product launches and differentiation of its services and brands.

As we approach the end of this year, those companies who have yet to put their plans in place will no doubt move into frenzied activity.

That is all well and good, but activity for its own sake - and without a strategic objective - can be almost as bad as none at all. There is no point committing budgets to promotional campaigns just because you have to be seen to be taking part.

If the decision is made to celebrate the Millennium the major question must be how? Do you take your top customers to the other side of the world to see the dawn of the new century? Do you have the biggest party the north has ever seen? Or do you take advantage of the many sponsorship opportunities that will become increasingly available?

All interesting options. But there could well be a danger in getting involved in Millennium initiatives. If so many companies do jump on the roundabout, will it be possible for them to stand out from the crowd?

With the best will in the world gaining publicity for your 'special' activity may prove highly difficult. The media will be saturated with stories it simply can't use and then, ultimately, Millennium 'fatigue' will set in.

If corporate hospitality is the answer then be aware that your competitors will also be inviting your customers to an event. The customer may well be forced to make a choice, as they cannot take up every invitation. To get that key person to come along, your offering may well have to be unbeatable - which, inevitably, means expensive.

So, the message is to think about the whole thing very seriously. Do you need to take part, and if you do, will it be a success?